UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/526,342	03/02/2005	Gerald Dean Erdman	DN 99-009	8932

7590 11/16/2007

Michael J Herman
Minerals Technologies Inc
One Highland Avenue
Bethlehem, PA 18017

EXAMINER	
FIORITO, JAMES	
ART UNIT	**PAPER NUMBER**
1793	
MAIL DATE	**DELIVERY MODE**
11/16/2007	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/526,342	ERDMAN, GERALD DEAN	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	James A. Fiorito	1793	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *23 October 2007*.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1, 4-9, and 12-16* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1,4-9 and 12-16* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date *11/07*.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1, 4-9, and 12-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pope US 3150926 in view of WO 98/41475.

Pope teaches a process of producing precipitated calcium carbonate, comprising the steps of: (a) providing 98% calcium hydroxide (Column 9 Lines 46-51, Claims 3 and 4); (b) carbonating the calcium hydroxide with carbon dioxide gas for a time sufficient to at least partially convert the calcium hydroxide to calcium carbonate (Claims 3 and 4); (c) comminuting the at least partially converted calcium hydroxide (Claim 3 and 4); and (d) sequentially repeating steps of carbonating and comminuting for a time sufficient to substantially convert the calcium hydroxide to calcium carbonate having at least about a 90 weight percent conversion to calcium carbonate and having a solids concentration of at least about 92 weight percent (Claims 3 and 4). A moisture content of 10 percent is considered to be at least **about** 92 weight percent solids. The process of Pope is continuous until at least a 99% conversion is achieved (Claims 3 and 4).

Since Pope teaches that the calcium hydroxide producing process occurs simultaneously with the carbonating step, Pope does not disclose the water content of

the calcium hydroxide produced from the process. However, it would have been obvious to use the process of making calcium hydroxide taught by Pope to make the 98% calcium hydroxide that is required by Pope (Example 2).

Pope does not expressly state that the solids content of the calcium hydroxide is about 92 weight percent solids.

WO '475 teaches a high energy milling process of making calcium carbonate from calcium hydroxide (Page 3 Lines 25-29). The examples of WO '475 teach the process using different solids content of calcium hydroxide yielding different results (Examples 1-5).

It appears that the solids content of the calcium hydroxide slurry of both Pope and WO '475 if a result effective variable. "[D]iscovery of an optimum value of a result effective variable in a known process is ordinarily within the skill of the art." *In re Boesch*, 205 USPQ 215, 219 (CCPA 1980).

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1, 4-9, and 12-16 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to James A. Fiorito whose telephone number is (571)272-7426. The examiner can normally be reached on 9am - 6pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Stanley Silverman can be reached on (571) 272-1358. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

James Fiorito JF
AU 1793

Steven Bos
Primary Patent Examiner
AU 1793